The programmes of all Satellite Channels, when transmitted/ retransmitted through cable television networks in the country, are required to adhere to the Programme and Advertising Codes prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and Rules framed thereunder. The Programme Code prohibits carriage of such programmes in Cable Service, which offend good taste or decency, contain anything obscene, corrupt or injure the public morality or morals.

(e) Press in India is free from Government control. The Press Council of India (PCI) is a statutory authority established for preserving the freedom of the Press and for maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers and news agencies in India. PCI has set the Norms for Journalist Ethics. Norm laid down by PCI state that Editors must check the authenticity of each story and comments/versions of all concerned parties must be included. The PCI may warn, admonish or censure the Newspapers, the News Agency, the Editor or the Journalist or disapprove the conduct of the Editor or the journalist, as the case may be, or offending the standards of journalistic ethics or public taste or for professional misconduct.

The PCI also takes cognizance *suo moto,* or looks into specific complaints against obscence and vulgar advertisements in print media.

Regulation of news and entertainment channels

†1499. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:
SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the number of news and entertainment channels telecasting their programmes in the country, the number of channels out of the above which are being operated under Indian ownership and number of having foreign partnership;

(b) whether Government are contemplating for any legal set up for regulation of news and entertainment channels; and

(c) if so, by when such regulation would be framed, if not, the reasons therefor?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) The Government has so far permitted fifty eight (58) companies to uplink 161 private TV channels from India. Seventeen (17) companies allowed to uplink sixty eight (68) TV channels have varying degrees of foreign equity. The remaining 41 companies permitted to uplink 93 TV channels have 100% Indian equity. Further, this Ministry does not maintain records of channels uplinked from outside India, which are also available to viewers in India.

(b) and (c) The Government is contemplating the setting up of an autonomous body to regulate the content on television channels.

DTH operations by Prasar Bharati

1500. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Prasar Bharati, which launched its DTH operations last year, is considering subscriber base of 5 million by the year-end;

(b) if so, whether according to CEO of the organizations over 3 million have opted for the service uptil now;

(c) whether 10 per cent of this response has come from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat;

(d) whether private channels agreed to Prasar Bharati's proposal to charge carriage fees for its DTH platform; and

(e) if so, by when Prasar Bharati is likely to complete its contract?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Prasar Bharati's DTH service, DD Direct+, is a free-to-air service and as such it does not have subscribers. However, news reports and market sources indicate that over four million receive systems have been sold out in different parts of the country since the launch of the DD Direct Plus service on 16th December 2004. It is likely to increase by the year-end.